

Alternative Education

Program Summary

Alternative education is a program operated as a subdivision of the regular K-12 program. It is designed for students who can be better served in an alternative delivery system. Alternative education pupils are funded under the K-12 foundation rate. Students served include those who have special needs and are lacking sufficient credit to graduate with their class. Alternative education programs often include expanded services from the regular program such as counseling, childcare, and transportation.

Eligibility

The local district determines eligibility. The district also determines referral processes.

Administration

Alternative education programs must meet all of the regulations for K-12 programs. These regulations are detailed in the school code and pupil accounting manual. What follows are some specific issues of concern.

All teachers must hold a valid Michigan Teaching Certificate. Elementary or secondary certification is permitted at the discretion of the district.

Pupils under age 16 may not be served in the same classroom with adult education students over 20 years old and counted for State Aid purpose.

Any facility used by an alternative education program must meet facility requirements identified in the school code.

All pupils must be residents of the district unless a waiver is granted for an individual pupil by that pupil's district of residence, or the student is enrolled under P.A. 105 Schools of Choice.

Full-time alternative education pupils must have provision for a lunch available on the premises (P.A. 335, Sec. 380.1272).

Breakfast must be made available to all full-time pupils at each school if more than 20% of the lunches served the immediately preceding year were free or reduced price lunches. The board of a primary school district or a fourth class school district that does not operate all of grades K-12 may establish and operate a school breakfast program (P.A. 335, Sec. 380.1272).

If the school district increases the number of required instructional days for K-12, the alternative education program must match the local number of days.

A full-time program must be offered, the alternative education program must operate for at least 1,098 hours for the 2001-2002 school year.

Since 1978, state law has required that each student have a certificate of immunization at the time of registration or no later than the first day of school. IP-10 reports are submitted by November and

February of each year. The Department provides the requirements and forms to all Superintendents in August of each year. Questions regarding immunizations should be referred to the School Health Unit at (517) 373-7247. This requirement does not apply to adults.

Waivers

Districts may request a waiver of the minimum number of days (180) required for an alternative education program.

Districts may request a waiver of the minimum number of hours (1098) required for an alternative education program. However, the program should be offered for a minimum of 80% of the total required hours for the students to be considered a full-time student.

To request a waiver, districts should submit a letter, that states the number of proposed days and total hours of operation, as well as a description of the program, and schedule that:

- Identifies and describes the “alternative” program.
- Ensures that the program will require an IDP for each student enrolled.
- Declares the number of hours to be provided.
- Describes the provision of additional support services.

Alternative education programs are required to be staffed by teachers certified with either an elementary or secondary certificate or substitute permit issued through the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Professional Preparation and Certification.

Applications

Waiver applications are for 180 day and 1098 hours requirement only.

Reports

Reporting for alternative education programs follow K-12 requirements.

Funding

Funding will be at the foundation district rate or district of residence rate depending upon the type of program. State Student Foundation Grants would be a minimum the same as the traditional K-12 program.

Assessment

Alternative education students are assessed per the requirements of the Alternative Education Program assessment practices established by the administering district.

Progress

Progress expectations follow the K-12 program.